

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 ROME 13454 181702Z  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 DHA-02 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00  
PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01  
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 MCT-01 ACDA-07 MC-02  
AID-05 EB-08 IGA-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00 ERDA-05 COME-00  
/115 W

-----085473 190130Z /70

R 181611Z AUG 77  
FM AMEMBASSY ROME  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6599  
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: MASS, IT, US, SF  
SUBJECT: ALLEGED ITALIAN MILITARY SALES TO SOUTH AFRICA

1. ARTICLE (APPARENTLY PART OF A SERIES) WHICH APPEARED  
IN ROME DAILY REPUBBLICA (LEFT-INDEPENDENT) AUGUST 6 BY-  
LINED FUDOLFO BRANCOLI, REPORTS TESTIMONY BEFORE U.S.  
CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE (UNIDENTIFIED) BY ONE SEAN  
GERVASI, ALLEGING HEAVY ITALIAN INVOLVEMENT IN SOUTH  
AFRICAN ARMS TRADE.

2. GERVASI, DESCRIBED AS "AMERICAN RESEARCHER", LONG-  
TIME CONSULTANT TO THE UN AND SPECIALIST IN SOUTH  
AFRICAN POLITICAL MILITARY AFFAIRS", IS QUOTED AS ASSERT-  
ING FOLLOWING ITALIAN MILITARY EQUIPMENT DELIVERED TO  
SOUTH AFRICA: 300 AERMACCHI MB-326 AND 100 MB326K  
AIRCRAFT, 25 205-A IROQUOIS HELICOPTERS BUILT BY  
AGUSTA UNDER BELL LICENSE, 400 M113 AL ARMORED CARS  
BUILT BY OTO-MELARA UNDER FMC LICENSE, AND 50 M-109  
155MM GUNS (OTO-MELARA UNDER U.S. LICENSE) MOUNTED ON  
TANKS. ACCORDING TO TESTIMONY AS REPORTED, THE  
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ARMORED CARS ARE STILL BEING DELIVERED. ARTICLE  
CONTAINS NOT UNEXPECTED INNUENDO: POSSIBILITY OF  
THIRD COUNTRY INVOLVEMENT IN TRANSFER OF THE EQUIP-  
MENT (LIBYA, PORTUGAL, ANGOLA AND MOZAMBIQUE ARE  
SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED--THE LATTER TWO PRESUMABLY  
IN PRE-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD); AMERICAN USE OF ITALIAN  
LICENCEES TO ARM SOUTH AFRICA.

3. IN A CALL TO THE EMBASSY, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAS ASSERTED THAT INFORMATION IN THE ARTICLE IS LARGELY AND OUTRAGEOUSLY FABRICATED. THE MINISTRY IS CONSIDERING WAYS IN WHICH A RESPONSE TO THE ALLEGATIONS CAN BE MADE AND REQUESTED EMBASSY ADVICE AS TO CREDENTIALS OF SEAN GERVASI AND IDENTIFICATION OF COMMITTEE BEFORE WHICH HE TESTIFIED. MINISTRY WOULD APPRECIATE ANY FURTHER INFORMATION WE CAN PROVIDE THAT MIGHT HELP REFUTE FOLLOWING ALLEGATION REPORTEDLY MADE BY GERVASI: "SINCE ITALY HAS ADHERED TO THE EMBARGO AND SAYS IT RESPECTS IT RIGOROUSLY, IT WOULD BE WORTH ASKING WHAT SYSTEM IS USED TO PUT IT INTO PRACTICE. HAVE SPECIAL DIRECTIVES BEEN ISSUED OR NOT? IF YES, ARE THERE 'OPENINGS' WHICH PERMIT THE SALE OF ARMS? AS FOR THE U.S., I CAN SAY THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE REFUSES TO MAKE THESE DIRECTIVES PUBLIC MAKING IT IMPOSSIBLE TO ESTABLISH IF IN THE GAME OF LICENSES THERE IS A FORMAL VIOLATION OF THE RULES." .HOLMES

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** MILITARY SALES, ALLEGATIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Sent Date:** 18-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1977ROME13454  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D770299-0380  
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**Image Path:**  
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**Legacy Key:** link1977/newtext/t19770848/aaaabooa.tel  
**Line Count:** 81  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
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**Message ID:** 81038b58-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 10-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 1560880  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** ALLEGED ITALIAN MILITARY SALES TO SOUTH AFRICA  
**TAGS:** MASS, IT, US, SF  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/81038b58-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009